



CHEMONICS INTERNATIONAL INC.



Mid-Term Strategy Revalidation

For

USAID/GUINEA

Submitted to:
U.S. Agency for International Development

Submitted by:
Chemonics International Inc

April - May 2001

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Preface		i
Summary		iii
SECTION I	USAID/Guinea's Strategy through FY 2004	I-1
	A. Overall Consistency and Validity	I-1
	B. Sustainable Development in Guinea and the Regional Humanitarian Crisis	I-3
	C. The Cross-Cutting Nature of the Four Sos	I-3
	D. Is the Program Meeting Its Ultimate Customers' Needs?	I-4
	E. The Program's Strategic Impact: Projected Further, More Visible	I-4
	F. Decentralization, "Deconcentration," Accountability, and Transparency	I-6
SECTION II	SO 1: Natural Resources Management	II-1
	A. Summary of Findings	II-1
	B. Challenges Posed by the Current SO	II-1
	C. Discussion of USAID's SO and the Irs	II-3
	D. What Worked Well	II-4
	E. Findings and Recommendations	II-4
	F. Issues or Questions That Need to Be Strategically Examined	II-9
SECTION III	SO 2: Health	III-1
	A. Summary of Findings	III-1
	B. What Has Worked Well	III-2
	C. Obstacles to Achieving Results	III-3
	D. Issues or Questions That Need to Be Strategically Examined	III-4
SECTION IV	SO 3: Education	IV-1
	A. What Worked Well and What Were the Major Contributions to Success	IV-1
	B. Major Obstacles and How They Are Being Addressed	IV-9
	C. Operating Assumptions and Hypotheses	IV-12
	D. Issues or Questions That Need to Be Strategically Examined	IV-14
SECTION V	SO 4: Democracy & Governance	V-1
	A. Summary of Findings	V-1
	B. What Worked Well and Major Obstacles	V-1
	C. Critical Assumptions	V-4
	D. Discussion of USAID's SO Intermediate Results	V-5
	E. Issues or Questions That Need to Be Strategically Examined	V-6
	F. The Budget	V-8
ANNEX A	A Note on the Consultancy Team	A-1

Preface

At USAID/Guinea's request, a team from Chemonics International visited Guinea and prepared this thought piece to assist the Mission in the mid-term revalidation of its seven-year strategy. The paper is addressed to USAID/Guinea.

Rather than being a formal report, this document presents the ideas and views of five consultants with wide ranging African and global experience in development. It does not follow a rigid format but treats the ideas in the scope of work according to the circumstances of each sector. It is meant as a contribution, by no means the only one, to USAID/Guinea's strategy debate and deliberations as the Mission heads into the second half of its CSP period.

The team's work was conducted over an intense three and one-half weeks, spent mainly in the field. After receiving basic documents and undergoing a brief orientation in Chemonics headquarters, the team proceeded to Guinea where it met with relevant groups and persons throughout USAID, reviewed additional documents, discussed progress with a range of implementing partners throughout the program, talked to many other donor and government representatives, and went on field trips. These activities were undertaken collectively and individually, as appropriate.

The reader is referred to the Country Strategy Plan (CSP) for the basic strategic concepts and background as well as a key to acronyms used.

The visiting team enjoyed excellent support throughout the USAID at all levels. In particular, it wishes to thank the Director, the Deputy Director, the SPRC team leader, and the leaders of the four SO teams along with their staff members for their availability and cooperation.

Summary

Revalidation of USAID's seven-year, sustainable development strategy for Guinea comes at an important moment. Like many of the donors, the United States finds itself trying to strike an appropriate balance between supporting short-term stability and promoting long-term economic and political reform. Some tugging and pulling can be noted in the relationship between the two.

Under strain from outside events, Guinea's economic growth rate has slid below two percent, the lowest in years. A gradual if irregular trend toward more political liberty is stalled. The government has announced draconian fees and taxes to curtail electronic communications (Internet, cellular telephones, ham radio) it does not control.

The Mission's strategy took effect in FY 1998 and has now reached mid-point. A highly ambitious program goal is supported by four strategic objectives that range from sweeping to less than strategic. Recent program results are notable in basic education. They are more modest in health and natural resources management as well as less direct in democracy and governance. Rather than tackling economic growth directly, USAID has chosen to work principally on the underlying problems that render Guinea's sustainable growth so difficult. (Exceptions are found in the NRM portfolio, but they lack the size or range an economic growth program would warrant). The choice is rational, if incomplete, for true sustainable development performance.

The Mission, in our view, should consider ways to build a solid growth portfolio that complements its current approach. The aim would be to help Guinea reach a stage of progress that can economically sustain and improve its people's standard of living, including all important advances in health, education, the environment, and participation that must continue. Based on experience from the last three and one-half years, a partial *de facto* trading of some health and democracy & governance funding for economic growth funds might be feasible.

This report recommends a tightening of the current results framework to produce a more compact analytical structure (less ambitious program goal, readjusted SOs in health, NRM and DG, some IR realignments). The effect should be to reduce the stretch between the goal to which the Mission wishes to contribute and the means available, or likely to become available, to the Guinea program.

In the Guinean context, such a revised strategic approach will give better visibility to USAID's tangible development achievements and make clearer their contribution to the country's long-term economic, social, and political progress. It should also help to highlight the case for economic growth funding.

SECTION I

USAID/Guinea's Strategy through FY 2004

The 26 years of the Sekou Toure regime that took power at Guinea's independence in 1958 succeeded in encouraging a sense of nationhood unusual in sub-Saharan Africa. However, in this time, natural resources management and other development issues were given minimal if any attention. The result is that in 2001, another 17 years later, the country still struggles to catch up to the continent's average in basic human development indicators. Although some economic and political liberalizing has occurred, Guinea's unusual natural resources have yet to be translated into a significantly better life for the ordinary person. Progress has been made, but the base from which it started was so low that Guinea remains behind the typical African country in most development respects.

USAID/Guinea's strategic objectives and the program that flows from them are concentrated on promoting an improved development environment through action conducted at the grassroots by NGOs. In the team's view, such an approach is understandable and warranted, given the country's major pre-development needs and the challenges of working directly within government ministries.

The approach followed nonetheless appears somewhat restricted compared to the sweeping program goal, which suggests a full-blown response to major development needs including the key problem of raising incomes. Although the CSP stresses economic growth and the goal cites economic wellbeing first, the SOs and the underlying program give little direct attention to economic activity. They appear to concentrate principally on preparing the long-term groundwork so the society can eventually be in a position to accelerate to, and maintain, a high rate of economic growth. This is a perfectly laudable aim, one that seems highly appropriate, but it is certainly more limited than the stated goal.

A. Overall Consistency and Validity

USAID's program goal and its strategic objectives are clearly relevant to Guinea's development needs and U.S. interests in West Africa.

The Mission begins with a highly ambitious sustainable development program goal: *Improved Economic and Social Well-Being of All Guineans in a Participatory Society*. The CSP does not mention the period over which the goal applies or suggests goal indicators that might be used to track progress toward it. Suppose, though, that the contraceptive prevalence rate could be one appropriate goal indicator. Guinea's CPR is believed to be around 5 percent today; adding two points a year, on average, would constitute a brisk increase. Along the lines of the breakthrough in Kenya, achieving a 35 to 40 percent CPR would certainly indicate a major step forward toward the goal, yet such a CPR can hardly be less than 15 to 20 years away in Guinea at the best. This example illustrates the soaring ambition of the goal.

Making a significant contribution to realizing the present goal would require a large program driving the achievement of a number of high level strategic objectives. What one finds below the program goal, though, are four SOs that range widely in their level and ambition and are not necessarily commensurate with the programs put in place to carry them out.

Two SOs (Democracy & Governance, Health) are stated at a high level that tracks well with the lofty aim of the goal. Their program activities, however, are inadequate for the high level of achievement they imply. These SOs would benefit from a downward adjustment and a fine-tuning of their strategic focus.

One SO (Natural Resources Management) is positioned lower than a strategic level. Its activities probably will make little contribution toward an impact on the program goal. The gap is enormous, in other words, between the overall goal and this SO, which suggests it have some further strategic analysis and direction setting. Such changes are critical because the NRM SO is the principal point in the USAID program where one can hope to have a direct effect on the economic growth Guinea needs so badly.

One SO (Education) is positioned strategically but is carefully targeted to what one could reasonably hope to achieve with the means available. This SO enjoys the most coherent program and, despite various implementation issues, seems to be realizing reasonable results at this stage.

In the social sectors of health and education, activities are aimed clearly at the wellbeing of the population and laying the groundwork for more productive economic performance. Similarly, the DG work should help build civil society and eventually improve the enabling environment for economic growth.

In preparing the way for more sustainable use of Guinea's natural resources, a strategically focused NRM SO could help make possible better long-term economic effects. It is within NRM that the Mission also has its most explicit economic growth activities at this stage, based on improvements in agriculture, on small enterprise development, and on Guinea's new endeavor to manage non-agricultural natural resources. The team's sense is that considerable additional attention to economic growth will be needed in the future USAID/Guinea program. It would judge a redirection of the strategic basis of the NRM portfolio a good first move toward that end.

As for the entire results framework, the Mission might consider compressing the structure in addition to realigning three of the SOs. This will reduce the analytical distance between the levels. Specifically, the program goal could be scaled down to correspond more closely to the achievements possible from the SOs.

USAID/Guinea might debate a possible alternative program goal along these lines: *An Increasingly Receptive Environment for Improving the Long-Term Economic and Social Well-Being of All Guineans in a Participatory Society*. Some might deem this aim not sufficiently ambitious. But we judge it to require much of the Mission's attention while at the same time being more in keeping with the program's real possibilities.

The Mission could consider linking a few broad indicators with such a revised goal. A public health measure picked from the DHS, the overall growth of civil society organizations and a basic education yardstick would be plausible examples of how progress could be gauged.

If the DG and Health SOs were then restated along the more modest lines of Education, and the NRM SO were reformulated to become strategic, the framework would become more realistic in the light of present circumstances. USAID/Guinea would also be better placed to show concretely how its SO achievements are plausibly contributing to progress against the goal. This point is discussed in more detail below, in a section on how the program's strategic impact might be projected further and made more visible.

B. Sustainable Development in Guinea and the Regional Humanitarian Situation

Guinea has long-term sustainable development potential, and the USAID program is working to help create the conditions that will allow the potential to be realized. It is probably thanks to this potential, along with an unusual sense of nationhood for sub-Saharan Africa, that the country has succeeded at enduring the many strains presented by the long-lasting humanitarian problems along its southern borders.

In the context of 2001, many donors including USAID wish to help improve Guinea's short-run stability in a difficult sub-region, while also encouraging a longer-term trend toward economic and political liberalization. The dilemma is that the exigencies of stability now can cut against the longer trend, while liberalizing influences may, in the short-term, work counter to stability. A delicate balancing act, fine tuned frequently, will be necessary if both goals are to be accomplished. A revised goal of the kind proposed above would be consistent with the full range of humanitarian and development efforts that the donors may be requested to assume.

The development problems in Guinea are severe. They will not be overcome soon or easily. But working energetically with Guineans and other donors to make progress on them constitutes the best chance to improve the country's sustainable well being and therefore its long-term stability in a region where other countries are beset by far graver problems.

C. The Cross-Cutting Nature of the Four SOs

USAID's four strategic objectives have natural relationships to each other. The most obvious is between democracy & governance and the other three. The Guinea DG activities emphasize the community participation process, into which can readily be drawn the desired content from health, basic education, and NRM. Indeed, not to do so would be to miss a great opportunity, and we urge the Mission to seek ways to build additional mutually supporting relationships between DG and the other SOs. Other obvious linkages are between basic education and health (HIV/AIDS is an ideal topic), and basic education and NRM. Even health and NRM may be able to develop useful links. The Mission's present strategic stock taking and revalidation work is an excellent beginning, as is the plan to hold a retreat on the subject. Every opportunity should be seized to encourage SO teams to talk with each other, share their experiences, cooperate, and build synergy.

Guineans do not live their lives by sector or strategic objective any more than the rest of us do. The whole is what counts in the end. The blend of influences that comes to bear on a person every day has its collective impact on the society as well. More income in one's pocket can make possible better care for a family's health or education advantages for children. Such improvements (whether one has paid for them directly or gained them from effective government services or development programs) feed back into an individual's economic progress, not to mention that of the family and broader society. A healthier child will learn better in school, leading to better preparation for productive work, which in turn can raise income. A parent trained and encouraged to participate locally, be it in NRM or any other activity, is more likely to end up an effective citizen of a society that eventually cherishes representative government and demands good governance.

These — not the expectations of the programming structure in use at the moment — are the real reasons for carefully weaving together all of the mutually supporting strategic elements that make up a good development program. Moreover, they are the primary justification for constructing a USAID economic growth portfolio for Guinea that can capitalize on, as well as help sustain, the advances the Mission has been pressing forward since 1997.

D. Is the Program Meeting Its Ultimate Customers' Needs?

In the most elementary sense of the question, it is. Many more children immunized, parents' groups helped to become effective and primary producers empowered, thanks to USAID's efforts, bear eloquent testimony to this fact. There have definitely been beneficial effects for ultimate customers.

From the team's perspective, seeking ways to improve those benefits, render them longer lasting and extend them further is the main point of the strategy revalidation. Our recommendations go along the lines of building on the best while drawing positive lessons from those problems that persist. Obstacles remain abundant. The key is to turn the knowledge derived from them into forces for improvement.

Guinea's difficult post-independence history left it disadvantaged. It is important to recognize the recent progress made from a very low starting point. Because the country is still behind, in relative sub-Saharan terms, what is important progress to it may not always be so recognized from afar.

How better to meet even more of the needs of many more of the ultimate customers remains the challenge for USAID, its partners and stakeholders, and the ultimate customers themselves.

E. The Program's Strategic Impact: Projected Further, More Visible

The team believes that more could be done to project the program's goal and strategic impact. From discussion with the SO teams and a review of program and technical documents, the Mission clearly devotes a great deal of attention to the indicators that report information on Intermediate Results (IRs) and Sub-Intermediate Results. However, the extent to which indicators are used to adduce strategic results, let alone goal results, is less clear.

Moving up the analytical structure from the IRs is never easy. But it is essential if USAID/Guinea is to succeed at projecting a persuasive, realistic picture of its program accomplishments. The building blocks, the IR indicators, are there. They need to be marshaled systematically into strategic results that will forcefully convey the development impact created by the programs underlying each strategic objective. The SO results, in turn, ought to be meshed analytically into a cohesive argument of impact upon the program goal. The aim should be to present a compelling case of sustainable development progress to those who make funding and personnel decisions.

The reasoning should begin from the internal logic of each SO. With the possible exception of NRM, the SOs are developed analytically and mature operationally. A case can be made that each SO program has realized enough tangible results, taken together, to constitute an ensemble of some progress toward achieving its strategic objective.

But to argue persuasively for an effect on the goal requires more than collecting successful SOs. Goal impact suggests broader synergy than is found within even the best SO, and it is far less susceptible to measurement. That the case becomes more abstract in no way compromises its value. Fortunately, USAID/Guinea's program displays clear synergy, most obviously between democracy & governance and all of the other SOs, but to some degree between any two SOs. Realistically, the analysis will be largely qualitative at this lofty point in the structure, but it can nonetheless be powerful. Showing the mutually reinforcing links among SOs (for instance, how learning DG participation practices can empower parents who are eager to influence the quality of their children's education) is a step on the way to a compelling argument that USAID is in fact having an impact on the program goal. In the qualitative DG-education example above, a valuable behavior change is occurring and can be replicated further.

Some quantitative measurement may be possible above the SOs. For instance, a common feature throughout the program is the development of social capital through assistance to the formation of grassroots groups. At present, these groups tend to be counted separately by SO: parents' associations (education), economic resource associations (DG), farmers' associations and forest management committees (NRM), health committees (health). Since all encourage participation in civil society, each could also be counted as one more civil society organization aided. The grand total could help to suggest a quantitative USAID impact toward the program goal.

By undertaking such an approach to SO and goal reporting, USAID/Guinea should improve its chances of retaining sustainable development status along with adequate funding and staff.

To start off, the team suggests an explicit effort to relate IR and sub-IR accomplishments, as measured by their respective indicators, to the achievement of each SO as a whole. Three of the SOs have indicators. It is around the strategic indicators that an analytical sense of progress should be developed (if that does not appear feasible in any given case, the strategic indicator should be re-thought). If acceptable data exist to show SO progress as measured by a strategic indicator, so much the better. If not, the programs have been on track long enough and produced sufficient effects, in our view, for the results from the IR indicators and below to be organized into an analytical presentation that shows some SO accomplishment. In any document or

briefing, to lead off each section on an SO with such an analysis will be more persuasive than to move the discussion almost directly at the start into intermediate results.

Similarly, any document or briefing on USAID/Guinea's overall program might usefully begin with a section that offers a broad analytical sense of how the synergy created by success in several SOs is progressing toward the program goal. We all know the program goal as a slippery concept toward which attributions must be made with caution. No one should claim that USAID has assumed, or should assume, the sole responsibility for achieving a program goal. But a good program has goal effects. Reasonable attribution from SO achievement can usually be made, particularly if the SOs were drawn with care and their results are shown to reinforce each other. USAID/Guinea can stake out a place on that ground from which to claim its share of credit for plausible contributions toward eventually realizing the goal. It is our position that an approach of this sort could help bolster the Mission's case for continuing or strengthening its sustainable development program.

Another form of goal attribution can be based on synergy among partners. If the Ministry of Education "deconcentrates" certain education functions (limited decentralization without financial authority) and publicizes budgets, while other donors build schools, and USAID helps organize grassroots parents' organizations, set up nationwide radio broadcasts to aid teachers and pupils in the primary schools and develop planning tools for education managers, and at the same time the World Bank trains more teachers, a good case may well exist for arguing the collective impact of these programs combined on the USAID/Guinea program goal. USAID holds a vital share of that impact and should take care to make it known.

The more donor synergy is pursued, the more likely is the emergence of compelling collective results. The joint creation of sector investment plans (SIPs) in education, health, and NRM is an explicit form of donor collaboration that the Mission might consider promoting. SIPs are usually orchestrated by the World Bank, with different donors choosing the program activities they prefer. They can improve rational investment choices while also making a demonstration of goal impact easier.

F. Decentralization, "Deconcentration," Accountability, and Transparency

During its work in Guinea, the team heard much about decentralization, "deconcentration," accountability, and transparency. As in many other countries, the government talks of decentralization but has yet done little about it. Deconcentration appears to signify some degree of program delegation down the line that stops short of transferring any financial authority. Deconcentration is the current talk in government education circles in Conakry, for instance.

Accountability and transparency may be present or absent regardless of whether any decentralization or deconcentration takes place. Revenues have traditionally disappeared into a black hole from which no light escapes. That fact makes transparency look more important than decentralization or its variants in obliging officialdom to be accountable to the citizenry. Still, if some degree of transparency were attained, how could it be maintained without pressure from below, from those who grow accustomed to knowing how revenues are used? That pressure might be more effective if applied to decentralized (or even deconcentrated) local structures than on the larger hierarchy.

In common with most development issues, decentralization, deconcentration, accountability, transparency, and their nuances must be worked on steadily and persistently over a long time for progress to occur. There is no question of jumping directly from today's circumstances to a radically new world. To the extent that this topic broadly concerns all of USAID/Guinea's strategic objectives, the Mission might wish to invite an internal debate on the general stance it ought to take, so as to push as much progress as possible wherever it may be feasible.

SECTION II

SO1: Natural Resources Management

As pointed out in the first section of this Revalidation report, the current implementation of the NRM SO — *Increased use of sustainable natural resource management practices* — is at a lower, less-than-strategic level than the other SOs.

Halfway through the CSP, the program that has been developed in support of the NRM SO focuses primarily on adoption of more sustainable and more productive agricultural practices, on the development of co-management systems for gazetted forest reserves and on the promotion of small enterprises.

A. Summary of Findings

We highlight here some of our team's findings on and recommendations for USAID/Guinea's natural resources management strategy. These suggestions are discussed in further detail in the subsections that follow.

- The NRM program should develop practices to help farmers convert from slash-and-burn agriculture to sustainable land use systems.
- In addition to pursuing increased revenue generation, the Mission should encourage the development of effective management systems for open access resources.
- USAID/Guinea should further emphasize economic incentives through better management of forests and sustainable, productive agriculture.
- The role of the DNEF should be better defined, as should the optimal level for management structures.

B. Challenges Posed by the Current SO

B1. Land Use Systems

The current SO's focus on practices does not lead the SO team and its partners to think strategically about the land use systems in the areas where they are working. For both agriculture and NRM, one can be very successful in promoting the adoption of specific improved practices at the same time that the sustainability and the productivity of the overall systems decline. On the agricultural lands of the villages where the NRM program is working, nearly all of the practices being promoted increase the sustainability and the productivity of two spatially-restricted components (the topade gardens and the lowland or *bas fonds* fields) of the agricultural or farming systems. These two are already the most productive and sustainable components of the system. At the same time, unsustainable slash-and-burn agriculture remains the dominant land use in nearly all of the village-lands (*terroir*) where the NRM program is working. In some areas, 85 percent of the agricultural lands are under slash-and-burn. The NRM program has almost no practices that are successfully being extended on these lands. The general consensus of the NRM partners working in the field is that the package of practices currently being extended on the

topades and lowlands will not lead to the conversion of slash-and-burn into sustainable land use systems. The sustainability and productivity of relatively small areas is being increased, while the sustainability and productivity of the majority of the lands in the agricultural system continues to decline.

B2. Customized Sustainable Land Use Systems

There is an implicit assumption we have “off-the-shelf” sustainable systems to extend. In reality, this is not true, either for agricultural lands or the natural resources on non-agricultural lands. To the extent that nearly all Guineans are dependent on unsustainable agricultural and NR use systems, the future of the Guinean people and of the country is put at risk. No explicit strategies have been developed to convert the slash-and-burn lands into sustainable land use systems. Unfortunately, the 1997 Guinea Agricultural Sector Assessment did not include an assessment of the sustainability of Guinea’s agricultural systems. We need to develop strategies and systems. For the co-management of the forest reserves, the draft Programmatic Environmental Assessment (PEA) makes it very clear that we are far from having tested, sustainable systems for co-management of these natural forests.

B3. Assumptions in the SO and IRs

Apart from the implicit assumption above and the explicit assumptions behind potential conflict between revenue generation and open access resources and direct incentives (see those sections below), the consultant did not encounter serious difficulty with the assumptions that lie behind the NRM SO and its IRs.

B4. Confusion between NRM and Agriculture

While the SO speaks only of NRM, it devotes more resources to agricultural lands than to non-agricultural lands. USAID/Guinea has adopted a very broad definition of NRM, one that includes agriculture. Although it has become fairly common within USAID (for political reasons) to include agriculture under NRM, this is not the prevailing use of the term “natural resources management.” The conversion of a forest or other ecosystems to agriculture normally involves the destruction of most of the natural resources on the converted site and, frequently, a severe alteration of the soil. For example, in the Fouta Djallon, old fonio field soils may be depleted of nutrients and organic matter and a thousand times more acid than the original, uncultivated soil under a natural forest.

Furthermore, strategies for developing sustainable, productive agriculture systems are intrinsically different from strategies for developing other NRM systems. As nearly all agriculture lands are *de facto* private lands, one needs to develop some form of agricultural extension system to change farmer practices. Nearly all natural resources on non-agricultural lands are common and/or state-owned resources. Management strategies involve the development of community or co-management structures and of NRM systems — a very different challenge from agricultural development. Farms are managed by farm families. Common resources need to be managed by communities.

We propose that the NRM SO be reformulated to address all of the above weaknesses. If the Mission wishes to continue working in both agriculture and NR, then we would propose the following wording for consideration:

Sustainable, productive farming systems and natural resource management systems developed and adopted.

This formulation places the emphasis on systems rather than practices, recognizes that systems need to be developed before they can be adopted, distinguishes between agriculture and NRM and should lend itself to a much more strategic approach by the SO Team. The recent testimony of the new USAID Administrator would indicate that agriculture can once again be called agriculture within USAID and would indicate that funding for agriculture should be expected to increase substantially in the near future.

B5. The Difficult Challenge of Farming Systems

The Mission and the SO team should not underestimate the challenge to be faced if they decide to tackle the development and adoption of sustainable, productive farming systems. There are no easy, off-the-shelf solutions. Addressing this question adequately will require additional resources (farming systems specialists, applied research component) to ensure a clear vision or strategy as to how the conversion of the unsustainable slash-and-burn fields and fallows may be converted to sustainable, productive land use systems. The development of productive agricultural systems may require that USAID make a commitment that would go beyond the end of the present CSP.

C. Discussion of USAID's SO and the IRs

The number and formulation of the IRs have changed at least twice since the original CSP was approved. The CSP and the NRM SO stress the importance of increased revenue generation. The assumption is that this will lead to increased investment in the sustainability and productivity of the NRM systems. Two of the IRs specifically target increased farm productivity and enterprise promotion, both of which should increase revenue generation. However, the CSP under-stressed land tenure as a cause of resource degradation.

While this increasing revenue generation is a highly desirable and necessary part of intensified, sustainable production systems, it is not a sufficient condition and may have negative effects. The problem is one of inappropriate land tenure/resource access rights that lead to *de facto* open access to natural resources. For example, some people will invest increased revenues in increasing the exploitation of open access resources by:

- Buying cattle to pasture on open access range/pasture land
- Hiring laborers/paying bribes for the clearing of more forest for slash-and-burn agriculture
- Buying guns for hunting open access game
- Purchasing fine mesh nets for unsustainable harvest of small fish

It is critical that increased revenue generation be accompanied by, or preceded by, the development of effective management systems for open access resources. This is not being done systematically at present. Open access resources subject to such abuse must be brought under community-based or co-management systems that prevent open access and unsustainable use of these resources.

D. What Worked Well

In this section, we note a few elements of USAID/Guinea's approach that have worked well, from both a strategic and results point-of-view. Our list is not meant to be comprehensive.

- The sustainability and productivity of specific areas targeted by the Mission has increased.
- The CSP has rightly stressed the importance of increased revenue generation, with two of the IRs targeting increased farm productivity and enterprise promotion.
- The development of economic incentives for sustainable agriculture and NRM pursued by USAID/Guinea is appropriate.
- The Mission has recently initiated procedures to obtain permission to promote inorganic fertilizer, an important step for increasing agricultural production (and thereby income) and reducing reliance on forests and other natural resources for subsistence.

E. Findings and Recommendations

E1. Opportunities for increased emphasis on economic incentives

In this section, we present our thoughts on how USAID/Guinea may further emphasize economic incentives through better management of forests and sustainable, productive agriculture.

E1a. Co-Management of Forests

The CSP and the SO stress the importance of increased revenue generation and of economic incentives for sustainable agriculture and NRM. The team believes this is appropriate, as it is highly doubtful that ecological sustainability of agricultural and NRM systems could be achieved as long as local populations remain severely impoverished with very low income, no primary health care, and limited, if any, education. Benefits must not only cover management costs and inputs but also must provide substantial income for all key stakeholders if co-management is to provide serious economic incentives for sustainable use.

Importance of economic potential for co-management. Some pre-CSP decisions appear to have reduced the opportunities to fully develop this strategic principle. This is clear in the choice of the three forest reserves for pilot forest co-management development. Nialama, Bakoun, and Suti Yanfou Forest Reserves are in the same three widely separated watersheds where the previous Guinea NRM project worked. These three watersheds were selected in 1991 based on criteria that had little to do with the economic potential of the forests in them. Co-management planning was begun at Nialama under the old project, and the current NRM SO team inherited this site. However, the decision to include Bakoun and Suti Yanfou was made under the current CSP. This

seems to have been based on Guinea's international commitments to protect these watersheds, not on their economic potential or suitability for co-management as private enterprise development.

Direct incentives. Much of the current NRM SO activity is targeted toward increasing agricultural productivity and enterprise development in the villages surrounding the three pilot forest reserves. This is done under the strategic assumption that villagers who can meet their needs from outside the forest will not have to clear or exploit the forest. However, this does not create direct incentives for sustainable forest use. Forest management systems that generate revenue directly from the forest itself generally provide the strongest, most direct incentives. Destroy the forest, and one destroys the source of the revenues. This type of direct incentives leads to the creation of economic interests groups whose livelihoods are directly dependent on the forest.

Benefits for multiple stakeholders. In general, the most successful form of co-management will generate benefits for all key stakeholders as well as funds to cover forest management costs. More specifically, CBNFM should generate revenue/benefits for the members of local resource user groups, the community as a whole, and different levels of government through tax levies on forest-based enterprises. Much of the funds for forest management are typically spent on local labor providing new employment opportunities for community members. In this way, all these groups develop a stake in the forest management system.

Importance of economic criteria for site selection. Community-based natural forest management provides one of the only promising strategic options for conserving part of Guinea's remaining natural forest areas. However, CBNFM in the subhumid climate of Guinea presents one of the more complex and difficult challenges in the NRM. The three existing CBNFM sites have marginal economic potential. It is not clear whether economic incentives can become strong enough at these sites for CBNFM stakeholders to become a socioeconomic and political force able to sustain this effort when donor support stops. Should these pilot sites fail, it may be a long time before USAID or other donors attempt this approach again. It is critical to select one or two sites where CBNFM can be developed as a clear success. To do this, economic criteria must be given priority consideration in the choice of future sites. We propose the following criteria be used to select future sites:

- *Motivation of local population.* Economic incentives are usually among the stronger motivating factors for CBNFM. One should not work where villagers are not motivated/interested in this approach.
- *Economic potential of the forest.* One should look for forests with significant quantities of commercial products for which:
 - *Markets* identified, readily available and reliable;
 - *Access to the forest is good.* Transport costs to market should not be excessive.
 - *Natural regeneration* of commercial species abundant or assured.

The market enterprise development aspects of CBNFM have been given relatively little attention. Markets should be a key criteria for site selection for CBNFM. Inventories should

focus on marketable species. The development of management systems and on silvicultural and regeneration techniques should focus on the most marketable species and products.

E1b. Sustainable, Productive Agriculture

One can sustain agriculture at low levels of productivity, but this will not contribute to poverty alleviation and rural development, nor will it generate revenues for investments in improved education, health care, or governance.

More strategic choice of villages. In the same way that one can be more strategic in the selection of pilot forests for co-management, criteria to select villages where the project will intervene to promote more sustainable productive agriculture could be developed. As discussed above, the NRM SO does not yet have viable strategies and identified economic alternatives to the unsustainable slash-and-burn agriculture on the exterior fields. The development of economic alternatives will, of course, be site-dependent and vary with socioeconomic (access to markets) and ecological factors. The Mission should seek to develop economic alternatives to cover as wide a range of situations as possible but work primarily in villages where the SO team feels that they do have clear strategies for developing sustainable productive systems.

Economic and ecological importance of proper use of inorganic fertilizers. The 1995 GNRMP Mid-Term Evaluation stressed the strategic importance of chemical fertilizers for the ecological sustainability of agriculture in Guinea. This is especially true for phosphate — a large portion of Guinea’s agricultural soils are deficient to severely deficient in phosphate. Inputs of phosphate are especially critical for sustaining soil fertility for rainfed cereal production. The 1997 *Guinea Agricultural Sector Assessment* stated that “Ensuring adequate soil fertility is the sine quo non for sustainable intensification of crop agriculture.” The assessment also stressed the importance of inorganic phosphate fertilizers for restoring soil fertility and agricultural productivity.

The team feels appropriate use of inorganic fertilizers is a key element of agricultural intensification, agricultural sustainability, increasing farm labor productivity, market-oriented development, income generation, and enterprise promotion. Inorganic inputs are critical for farmers to break out of their near-subsistence mode. The team was pleased to learn that USAID/Guinea recently initiated procedures to obtain authorization to promote inorganic fertilizers. The team encourages the NRM SO team to pursue the following strategies for promoting their use:

- Identify the uses for which inorganic fertilizers is financially rewarding. Proper guidelines should be developed, and these uses should be actively promoted.
- Combine the use of inorganic fertilizers with soil conservation techniques for increasing/maintaining soil organic matter and minimizing erosion. This is critical to make use of inorganic fertilizers more economically efficient and for minimizing negative ecological effects.
- Remove marketing barriers to the availability and costs of fertilizers.
- Increase the availability of credit for fertilizer for uses that are shown to be financially rewarding.

- Promote systems where the use of fertilizers can have secondary, positive impacts on food crops and on soil fertility maintenance beyond the direct impacts on the cash crops on which it is used directly.

E2. Need to Improve Village-Level Planning for NRM and Agriculture

One of the IRs for the NRM SO is focused on developing local capacity for the development of such plans at the level of the village and its *terroir*. We believe this is critical to the SO's success. However, effective guidelines for development of village plans for sustainable, productive agricultural and NRM systems of the *terroir* have not yet been prepared. These village-level plans should form the strategic framework that guides the interventions of all field partners. At this time, this component is probably the weakest element of the NRM SO.

A village *terroir* plan should address the following:

Natural resources. The plan should identify and describe the natural resources of the *terroir*. This should be clearly tied to a simple map of the natural resources of the *terroir*. The natural resource base of a *terroir* will typically include:

- *Soils* – the local, traditional soil classification scheme may be suitable for describing the key types of soils in the *terroir*. All soils used for agriculture should be described in terms of their suitability for agricultural uses
- *Water resources* – springs, recharge areas for springs, streams, lakes and ponds, reservoirs
- *Forests* – describe type and condition (level of degradation)
- *Fallow vegetation* – describe how they differ by site and by age of fallow
- *Range/natural pasture* – may be closely linked to fallow and forest resources
- *Wildlife* – they should be linked to forest
- *Fisheries*
- *Wetlands*

Agricultural and NR use systems The existing agricultural and natural resource use and land use systems of the *terroir* should be identified, described, and analyzed. This should also be presented in map form that may be simple or sophisticated, depending on the means available. Each of the land use systems should be linked to the natural resource base of the *terroir*. The analysis should include an assessment of the sustainability and productivity for each resource/land use system. The analysis should identify key constraints to sustainability and productivity. Trends in productivity, composition, and regeneration of the resource should be analyzed and presented. Opportunities to improve the sustainability and the productivity of each use system should be identified.

Land tenure/resource access rights for each type of land and resource should be described. It is critical to distinguish between resources that are privately owned and managed versus common resources. Nearly all agricultural lands are privately owned and managed. For common resources, it is important to distinguish whether they are open access or there are conditions on use and access and if there are actual management systems for these resources. Some lands and

resources may be characterized by a mix of private and common access resources. For example, the fallow vegetation on privately owned slash-and-burn agricultural lands may be an open access common resource during the fallow period.

Objectives. Each village plan should define a limited number of key objectives for the development/adoption of more sustainable and productive agricultural and NRM systems. The objectives should address the key problems of unsustainability of the village's existing resource/land use systems and should develop the key opportunities for improving the productivity of these systems. Objectives should be ambitious yet realistic. Objectives for private sector farming systems should be kept separate from objectives for commonly held/used natural resources.

Strategies/plans for achieving these objectives. The most important part of each document would lay out a basic strategy defining how each objective will be achieved. This should outline what will be done, who will be involved (village groups, NRM SO partners), the roles and responsibilities of each, and a general timeframe. Plans for improving the sustainability and productivity of agricultural lands will normally involve some kind of agricultural extension program. The plan should define what will be extended (improved practices), how it will be done (demonstration plots, exchange visits), who will be responsible for which actions, and when the different steps will be undertaken. For common resources, the plan should define the community management structures to be developed, their roles, whether a contract with DNEF is needed, and how management capacity will be built. It should describe how the resource will be managed, how costs and benefits will be shared, and how access to the resources will be controlled.

The village NRM and agriculture plan should form the strategic base used to define the roles and intervention of each of the SO1 field partners. The village plan should be developed in a highly participatory fashion, but it needs to be much more than a simple wish list of what the villagers would like.

Although not strictly part of a NRM plan, small and microenterprises that will be developed in the village — especially those based on agricultural and NR products — can be identified. How enterprise development will or can be linked to improved agricultural and NR sustainability and intensification should be defined in the plan.

E3. Strategic Options for Co-Management of Forests

Reasons for slow progress to date. At the highest levels of the DNEF and its parent ministry, there is presently an exceptionally good, tacit policy and institutional environment for the sharing or transfer of forest management authority from government to communities. The 1999 *Code Forestier* provides a legal base for co-management of forests under contracts to be established between communities and the DNEF/Ministry of Agriculture. The administrative regulations (textes d'application) that will define the legal details of how such contracts should be developed and approved have not been drafted. This is not a constraint at this time given the high-level support this policy enjoys.

Despite of this very favorable enabling environment, progress to date has been fraught with many problems. The draft *Programmatic Environmental Assessment* (PEA) analyzes many of them in considerable detail. Major reasons for these problems include:

Inadequate capture of lessons learned. The NRM specialist on the team worked on, or visited, most of the CBNFM pilot projects in the Sahel that were started between 1980 and 1989. The PEA offers the impression that the NRM SO team should be especially attentive to the mistakes made in the 1980s and capture the lessons learned through the rich history of CBNFM pilot project in West Africa. As of October 1998, there were 550,000 ha of dryland forests under CBNFM in Burkina, about 55,000 ha. in Niger, and other operational programs in Mali and Benin. The study tour organized to Niger did not visit any of the managed forests in that country.

Lack of full-time forester/NR specialists. One of the more striking aspects of the SO 1 co-management program is the fact that this complex, challenging effort is being run without any full-time forester or NR specialists. There has been strong reliance on DNEF personnel supplemented by short-term technical assistance. But the DNEF has never managed natural forests in Guinea before and does not have personnel experienced in CBNFM. There now seems to be clear recognition within USAID/Guinea and its grantee partners that a forester LTTA is needed. The team strongly supports this decision. If at all possible, someone with direct experience on a successful CBNFM effort elsewhere, preferably under similar ecological conditions, should be recruited.

More refined focus needed to determine information needs. There has been insufficient definition of the specific information needs to manage each forest. Consequently some of the mapping, inventories, market analyses, and baseline surveys have not been well focused and sometimes have had to be redone.

F. Issues or Questions That Need to Be Strategically Examined

Like most natural resources management, forestry management is best done on a case-by-case basis; there is no one perfect model to follow. Choices range from strategically critical options to much less important choices that could fall under the heading of implementation modalities. Some of the more strategically important questions that the co-management program faces include:

The optimal level for management structures. One of the principal questions for CBNFM is that of defining the optimal level for the management structures that need to be developed. Options include a separate management structure for each village with a forest in the *terroir* of that village, a single structure (as the NRM SO partners have done) that represents all the villages for a given reserve or other block of forest, or a structure with two or more levels. The village *terroir*-level structure has many advantages because it is based on traditional rights and values. In Guinea, however, this will rarely work because there are certain villages of ex-slaves and recent immigrants that lack traditional tenure rights to forest lands. But the single structure representing 30 villages or more may become just a distant entity for most of the villages concerned. Many governance problems — accountability, transparency — may easily develop under such a model. The NRM SO team should consider developing management structures that

represent a much smaller number of villages, four to six each. The highest level structure could become a service provider to the local structures as well as their interest group representative.

Relative roles for DNEF and the community structures. The program is evolving at present to a true co-management approach with a relatively strong role for the DNEF. Other countries are developing programs much more strongly community-based with a minimal role of the national forest service. There should be much more analysis and debate as to what the optimal roles and level of involvement should be for the DNEF.

Options for managing, sharing, and accounting for revenues. It is essential that the flow of revenues generated under co-management be completely open, transparent, and signed off by all stakeholders. This is critical for proper functioning of the economic incentives for sustainable use as discussed in this paper. But this is clearly not the case at present. These issues must be resolved in an open participatory manner in the short-term. Forest management funds need to be created from part of the revenues, and it must be made clear who will have decision-making authority over these funds.

Relative importance of quantity (area covered) versus quality. The SO indicator of 100,000 ha under co-management is rather ambitious. Reducing the area targets and concentrating more improving the quality of the CBNFM systems being developed on the pilot sites would likely yield more results. We advise that one additional forest be selected taking into account the criteria proposed in Section E1a. above.

SECTION III

SO2: Health

The Strategic Objective (SO) for health, its four Intermediate Results (IRs), and indicators as written in 1997 and slightly modified later the same year form a very coherent package that relate directly to USAID's goal aimed at stabilizing world population and protecting human health.

A. Summary of Findings

A1. Geographical Concerns: Scope Versus Funding

As written, the health SO presents the reader with an image of a program that is *national in scope*. However, this is not the case for the interventions in the public sector that account for two-thirds of the annual funding. The SO should be modified to reflect the true nature of USAID/Guinea's health program; a public sector program that is geographically focused, demonstrating the integration of primary health care services at the health center and health post level. The program should adopt the approach of replicating this model nationwide. In addition, USAID/Guinea has a very active program that reaches all Guineans through a private sector social-marketing approach that sells selected health, family planning, and HIV/AIDS prevention products. The social marketing program in Guinea has achieved notable success. This may be the most cost effective intervention within SO #2. At this juncture, the program is well established and capable of significantly expanding promotion and sales of condoms.

A2. IR 4: Decentralized Service Delivery

Intermediate Result #4 needs to be revisited by the Mission and close attention paid to the critical assumption that relates to this IR. To sustain a decentralized service delivery system, the Ministry of Health in Conakry must maintain certain essential services at the central level. Key systems — supply of essential pharmaceuticals, vaccines, a cold chain to deliver vaccines and heat-sensitive medications, and policies key to the pricing-cost recovery — *do not function*. The lack of these critically important systems and policies has greatly hampered implementation in the field. This IR and its critical assumption have proven to be the Achilles' heel for the strategic objective's work in the public sector

A3. Cost Effectiveness

Results to date within the public sector are not commensurate with the investments. Cost effectiveness should be calculated for the private sector social marketing program, as this may be one of the health program's most successful interventions.

A4. Shrinking Public Sector Health Program

As a result of the border disturbances the geographic scope of USAID's public sector health program has been reduced by 50 percent. Concentrate efforts in improving integrated health care services in the area remaining.

A5. Engagement by High-Level Officials

In developing a strategy for HIV/AIDS the Mission should rethink the current draft document, step back and approach HIV/AIDS prevention in Guinea in a strategic manner involving the US Ambassador, high-level Guinean Government officials, selected Guinean NGOs, and other donors in the creation of the strategy. A good place to begin would be sensitizing this forum to the economic, health and demographic implications of AIDS through the AIDS Interactive Model. HIV/AIDS presents an economic challenge to Guinea and the negative impacts from the disease reach across all sectors of the economy.

A6. Work and Staff Allocations

The division of work among the health office staff seems appropriate. The selected use of USAID Field Support funded by the Mission appears to complement the bilateral projects very well. It is important to examine yearly the need for field support and carefully select only the appropriate types of services. All USAID Field Support services are expensive as up to 50 percent of the Mission's funds used to "buy-in" to these services are charged to the implementing agency's overhead. It is an expensive way to do business; however, used strategically and with specific outcomes in mind can be very beneficial.

B. What has Worked Well

B1. Successful Social Marketing Program

The commercial sector in Guinea, predominantly small-scale business, abounds and has enabled the social marketing program to achieve national coverage. Profit margins for these merchants have been set and are relatively low, yet sufficient to generate sales. There is potential to expand both the product line for social marketing and to stimulate increased sales through national media promotion and minor adjustments upwards in profits for the retailers.

B2. From "Grass Roots" Up

Deciding to work a community level, or as it is often referred to "grass roots," was a strategic decision within all the Mission's SOs. For health, this has proven to be a good choice and has allowed the public sector health interventions to be clinic-based and community oriented. Selecting under-served rural regions distant from Conakry and working with the local health committees has helped the USAID-funded activities achieve modest results without being tangled up in the central-level bureaucracy. Within the two regions where USAID's public sector assistance began in 1997, more women are receiving pre-natal care for the first time. Children are being immunized and completing all required immunizations within their first year of life. Use of modern methods of contraceptives is beginning to rise. Guinean health care providers at

the health center and health post level have received training and supervision, allowing them to provide quality primary health care services within their clinic settings.

USAID is recognized for the clinic-based primary health care program it has undertaken in Haute Guinee and Guinee Forestiere, resulting in creditability among the donor community. Using the success of the community-level approach to improving health, USAID should be able to influence investments from other donors and bring pressure to bear on the central-level MOH for increased support to rural health care services.

B3. Demographic Health Survey

USAID funded the second Demographic Health Survey (DHS) in 1999. By far, the DHS is the most referenced document in the health and family planning sector. It is used by the government as a source for data and by virtually all the donor and NGO community as the “bible” for health and family planning trends. Sufficient data in health and family planning exist to enable the Mission to plan future interventions. HIV/AIDS sero-prevalence data is not collected as part of the DHS. This data is needed to inform USAID, the GOG, and donor community about the extent and location of HIV in Guinea. A survey to be carried out in conjunction with the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) is planned for May 2001. Results on HIV prevalence in Guinea, coupled with the DHS findings will provide USAID/Guinea ample information for planning interventions in the next three to five years.

C. Obstacles to Achieving Results

C1. Challenges Working with the Ministry of Health

The MOH in Conakry lacks of key systems that make a decentralized health system possible. A functional decentralized health system means that vaccines, essential pharmaceuticals, policy directives, Information/Education/ Communication messages and materials, models for cost recovery and transparent revenue disbursements are made available at the prefecture and sub-prefecture level. But the Ministry’s environment presents a challenge to foreign-led directions and technical assistance sitting within the ministry. And the task of working in the MOH becomes even more daunting when considering its state of financial management.

The fact that no other donor has undertaken the systems role speaks to the difficulty of instituting change. This is all the more reason why donor collaboration is so critical. There is no sense in creating parallel donor systems to supply the public sector. Could the MOH be persuaded by the donors to relinquish the running of these systems and instead contract with the private sector for the services? This offers a means whereby the donors can help create a private sector entity and provide both technical assistance and direct funding for procurement to that organization. It is necessary to create covenants whereby the MOH provides guidelines on essential pharmaceuticals, basic medical equipment, disposable supplies, vaccines, pricing and cost recovery. Donors are assured that their respective contributions can be accounted for.

There are several models for systems like this that provide national coverage of essential pharmaceuticals, disposable supplies, vaccines, and basic equipment. Most are administrated by Christian health associations, are financially self-sustaining, and serve a wide range of clients

from PVOs to private for-profit institutions. There is such a large economy of scale in national procurements, and many of the commodities are required such large quantities that very small mark-ups can generate sufficient revenue to staff and maintain these operations. However, we note that this is one short step away from a parastatal, and care must be exercised to not create one.

C2. Effects of Civil Instability

The border disturbances and closure of virtually all of Guinea Forestiere to implementation will reduce results under the health program's public sector assistance. All efforts should be made to focus public sector assistance through the PRISM project on the remaining geographic area in which the USAID Mission is permitted to operate.

A risk to the Mission's health program remains. If the health office is asked to provide assistance to internally displaced persons in camps or other health and disease prevention measures in the war-torn areas of Guinea, both financial and personnel resources will become extremely stretched. The Mission's current public sector assistance, which is key to the long-term development of integrated health services in Guinea, should be a priority for the Mission's Health Office.

C3. Disruptions to USAID's Program

Who is the client? USAID is! There are several examples where implementation has been hindered or delayed because one of USAID's implementing partners either forgot or was not reminded by the health office about donor – client relationships. PSI for example, has successfully leveraged funding from KfW. While this sounds good, in reality so much time has been required from the PSI staff dealing with a non-presence donor that the implementation of USAID's agenda has been adversely affected (slowed down). USAID needs to be clear with its implementing partners that first and foremost they serve their client, USAID. Secondly, USAID must help its implementing partners deal with other donors to secure funding or commodities with minimal disruption to USAID's program. Other donor agendas must of necessity become secondary to USAID.

Contractors and Grantees operate under different reporting relationships to USAID in the degree to which USAID can direct the work. In reality, the implementing partners, whether working under a contract or cooperative grant are present in Guinea because of USAID funding. USAID is the primary client and is allowed to question time and financial allocations to ensure smooth implementation. In the case of the PRISM project, prolonged arguments over agreed upon contractor placement in Guinea have led to time lost, exasperated staff, and implementation delays.

D. Issues or Questions That Need to Be Strategically Examined

D1. Strategic Objective #2 within the Mission's Framework

The SO gives the reader who is not familiar with the USAID/Guinea health program an impression of a national health care service delivery program. As currently written, the SO is too

broad for what USAID/Guinea is able to fund and implement. The Mission should make it clearer to the reader that it is working in two ways to increase the access and availability of integrated health services in Guinea and address the growing HIV/AIDS epidemic. Public sector interventions in selected geographic areas aim to produce sustainable models for eventual replication nationwide. Nationwide coverage is being achieved through the social marketing of selected family planning and health products in the private sector.

The Mission's goal statement has been characterized as "too lofty and vertically distanced" from the Education and NRM SOs. Decreasing the distance between USAID/Guinea's goal and the four Mission SOs will create a realistic framework for planning, reporting, and demonstrating synergistic impact. In line with the number one recommendation from the Chemonics' team to recast the Mission's Goal Statement, the health SO should also be modified to bring it more closely in line with what the Mission is actually implementing and can realistically plan on being funded in the next three to four years. This will help USAID/Guinea plan better health interventions, set realistic targets, and enhance reporting to Washington. A slightly lowered SO #2 might read like: "Increase use of primary health (FP/MCH/STI & HIV/AIDS) services through nationwide private sector social marketing and Ministry of Health sites within a select geographic region."

Given the extremely poor condition of the public sector health services and the low health indicators in Guinea, a targeted approach — such as the one currently being implemented within SO #2 — aimed to improve basic health care services in a limited number of government health facilities is justified. Donor funding is picking up slightly more than 80 percent of the Ministry of Health's recurrent budget, and the balance paid by the GOG is almost entirely for salaries. Donor coordination is critical in such a situation.

Additionally, the Mission should consider dropping the Couple Years of Protection (CYP) indicator for the SO. With an ever-increasing demand and utilization of condoms for the prevention of sexually transmitted diseases, particularly HIV, the majority of condoms distributed through clinics and sold represent protection from disease, with prevention of pregnancy being a secondary benefit. The remaining indicators are very appropriate for the SO. Perhaps an indicator in IR #2 that tracks the numbers of condoms sold on a monthly basis could be added. This will enable the health program to track PSI targets for condom sales. (Note: while sales figures are always referred to, one must understand that in all social marketing programs these numbers are often derived from distribution data as PSI is not able to, nor should it be asked to, account for actual sales at the end of the distribution network.)

D2. Intermediate Results (IRs) within SO #2

Intermediate Results # 1, 2, and 3 are very appropriate and should remain as written along with their respective indicators. As previously noted the health office may consider adding numbers of condoms per month as a way to demonstrate increased access to condoms in the "war" on HIV transmission.

Intermediate Result #4 needs to be carefully re-examined by the Mission and attention paid to the critical assumption(s) that surround drafting a new IR. Chemonics' presentation to the Mission referred to IR #4 as the *chien méchant*: the moment you take your eyes off the dog and do not pay any attention, it turns and bites you.

History has shown that no other donor has been willing to undertake the role of coordination for the health sector. While this is the responsibility of the GOG, in reality, a donor or coalition of like-minded donors often undertake this role on behalf of and under the signature of the Minister of Health to create and sustain a donor forum. It is through such a forum that key MOH systems can be addressed more effectively. One of the first tasks a health-donors forum may wish to undertake is establishing a short-term health sector strategy with accompanying investment plan. This allows each donor to work on agreed targets and apply their respective resources in a coordinated manner.

D3. SO #2 Synergy with Other SOs

The consultant did not come across examples where health activities are being carried out in conjunction with other SO interventions. Examples may exist; however, in the short time of this consultancy, none were evident.

Potential for working closely at the community level exists, especially in the education sector. The likelihood is very high that membership on the prefecture and sub-prefecture education and health committees is very much the same. Has USAID or another donor explored the possibility of committee consolidation? Perhaps a single "development" committee could serve as the focus for health, education, natural resource management, and governance.

In the area of HIV/AIDS prevention, a strong link exists between health and education. School curricula and teacher training benefit from well-written preventive health materials. Training institutions for both educators and health personnel at all levels need modern teaching aids and improved teaching methodologies to better convey the importance and ways in which HIV can be prevented. More can be done by the Mission to create this synergy.

SECTION IV

SO 3: Education

USAID's third strategic objective is to "*provide quality education to a larger percentage of Guinean children, with emphasis upon girls and rural children.*" The Mission is making good progress toward meeting its third strategic objective cited in the 1997 CSP, which covers FYs 1998- 2005. Its education program could, in some ways, be considered as a model for combining effective grassroots and grass tops effort.

Under S.O.3, the CSP targets three intermediate results:

- 3.1 Improved sectoral strategic planning, management and decision-making
- 3.2 Improved Instruction in Primary Schools
- 3.3 Improved opportunities for regional and gender equity in primary education

A fourth Intermediate Result pertaining to Improvement of Community Participation in Basic Education was added to the SOAG subsequent to CSP approval.

The education sector strategic objective remains valid and appropriate. It will contribute directly to the Mission's goal, "Improved Economic and Social Well-Being of all Guineans in a participatory society." The linkages between investment in education, particularly at the primary level, and economic growth are now generally accepted. Several studies have shown that the rate of return to investment in education is exceptionally high. Furthermore, the linkages between education and social sectors are direct and positive; educated mothers have fewer, healthier, and more educated children. Educated children have more respect for their environment and are more prone to democratic behavior, particularly when they have been taught in an inductive, participatory way.

Although there are implementation issues in each of the activities, USAID and the Government of Guinea (GOG) have made reasonably good mid-term progress toward the strategic objective that is to "*provide quality education to a larger percentage of Guinean children, with emphasis upon girls and rural children.*" The 2003 R-4 outlines the considerable progress that has been made, particularly over the past year.

A. What Worked Well and What Were the Major Contributions to Success

Most of Africa faces crisis with regard to its ability to muster the human and financial resources necessary to provide basic education to all of its children. Efforts to provide quality basic education to all children in traditional ways represent a formidable challenge. USAID/Guinea, the Ministry of Education, and EDC are to be commended for developing a low-cost alternative means of delivering basic education that benefits both teachers and children: interactive radio-based instruction (IRI). Although IRI does not replace the traditional teacher and classroom, it serves as an efficient and effective tool to improve the quality of teacher training, teaching, and learning.

A1. Radio-Based Interactive Instruction and Teacher Training

Although the use of radio for instruction is certainly not new to Africa or other parts of the world, Guinea's effort is the first to provide comprehensive "multi-channel" instruction (posters, teacher manuals, workbooks) to all children in the country, in French, mathematics, and science. National short-wave coverage has been realized in a remarkably brief time and has changed the face of education in the country. During a typical broadcast, the child listens to authentic voices, sounds, place names, conversations, and dramas. He/she is asked to demonstrate understanding of new concepts by singing songs, answering questions, manipulating objects, drawing pictures, moving his/her body, working in groups, and solving problems. During a typical broadcast, the teacher is asked to pose questions, organize group work, sketch figures on the blackboard and conduct lessons around them, lead songs and games, organize seat work, and propose projects and homework.

Interactive Radio Instruction in Guinea is a learning tool, a teaching tool, and a teacher-training tool. It is an extraordinary student-centered motivational tool. When teachers do not arrive in time for the radio-based instruction, children and parents complain to the School Director about the teacher's absence. Almost every child in Guinea knows Bouba and Safi, the radio teachers, and many cry when they say goodbye for the summer. Although the program is too young for evaluation, preliminary results show an increase in student performance within the early pilot areas. The World Bank plans to finance a seminar this year, to be held in Conakry to showcase the interactive radio-based education activity to other countries. The sustainability of the multi-channel approach has yet to be tested, and there appear to be some issues pertaining to coverage and reception.

A2. Community Participation in Education

The Mission's two community education activities have contributed a great deal toward closing the male/female equity gap. These activities promote internal democratic practice and good governance. Parent associations learn sound and effective management and are given voice to effect civic action and advocacy for education for their children. Within the project area, teachers and schools are held increasingly accountable. Save The Children created twenty new schools in Mandiana, and supported local NGOs to help form 20 parent associations (APEAEs). Some of the teachers are paid with funds raised in the community, but the MEN is gradually assuming responsibility for the staffing of these schools. World Education used local NGOs to support the organization and training of 231 parent associations in existing schools in the Fouta. World Ed seeks to create a critical mass of APEAE participation (85 percent in Mamou) which represents a strong bloc of advocacy for education within the Prefecture. As a result of "micro-projects," new classrooms, latrines, and enclosures were constructed which had the effect of making schools more "girl friendly." Enrollment of girls in all of the target zones increased significantly. In the Mandiana community schools, girls represent 50 percent of enrollment. There are some implementation issues, including project replicability and the way in which APEAEs or their representatives interact with government at various levels. The question of whether the funding of micro-projects inhibits long-term sustainability needs to be carefully examined.

A3. Planning and Management through FQEL

To achieve its goal of improving the quality and the equity of its elementary school system, the Fundamental Quality and Equity Levels (FQEL) activity has four objectives:

- To improve the management and planning process at all levels of the system
- To improve teacher competency at the primary level
- To improve teaching material appropriate to the national curriculum
- To improve the capacity of the education system to evaluate its impact on student performance

This activity has made good progress toward its goal. In addition to the multi-channel radio-based instruction discussed in Section A1. above, FQEL has been a driving force toward better quality, education management, and improved internal efficiency through the development of educational planning tools. Standards for student and school achievement have been established and applied nationally. Methods to assess the effectiveness of teacher deployment have been put in place and steps taken to measure FQEL norms relating to class size, teachers' academic qualifications, gender equity, and access to textbooks. FQEL now maintains an effective school based management information system that gives the MEN the information necessary to support effective decision making and resource allocation. FQEL provided support to the financial arm of the MEN through training and the creation of internal audit procedures manuals.

The reason for the success of the FQEL initiative is that it involves stakeholders at all levels of the system. While working from the national level down, the focus of attention was upon the school. There are some issues pertaining to FQEL, which has spread itself thin over the past 12 months to achieve national coverage. The quality standards have not yet been fully applied.

B. Major Obstacles and How They Are Being Addressed

B1. Teachers

There is a grave shortage of teachers, and the quality and morale of the teaching cadre is generally poor. There are approximately 20,000 primary teachers in the country, and the supply cannot keep up with demand. Despite innovative efforts by the World Bank to shorten the cycle of pre-service teacher training, Guinea has been unable to meet its target of adding 2,000 teachers per year. In 1997, 1,900 new teachers were added, but that figure fell to 1,500 in 1998, 900 in 1999, and 500 in 2000. Part of the failure to meet its recruitment targets lies in the fact that the Ministry of Public Service will only finance 100 new "government" teachers per year, while the remaining teachers serve on annually renewed contracts. There is little or no opportunity for career enhancement and about 8 percent of new teachers leave each year. To remedy this, the GOG has recently agreed to pay contract teachers on a 12-month, rather than 9-month basis, and has raised base pay. Contract teachers have no career status, and many refuse to serve in remote posts. Payment of salaries is sporadic and often very late. Many communities now hire their own teachers who, theoretically, must have successfully completed government-authorized teacher training. About 21 to 22 percent (480) of Guinea's primary school teaching cadre are paid directly by communities.

USAID coordinates its work well with the World Bank, which has taken the lead donor role in both in-service and pre-service training. Most donor representatives and Guinean MEN officials agree that pre-service teacher training is of poor quality. The GOG and the World Bank are cognizant of this problem and are undertaking efforts to improve the performance of the full and short cycle programs.

B2. Slow Progress on Decentralization

Progress on decentralization has been slow. The government has repeatedly pledged to allow school directors to manage their human and material resources, and it has signed S.O. Grant Agreements that call for financial and management delegation. But, until recently, the GOG has retained total control over the financing and management of the public school system. In April 2001, however, the MEPU-EC obtained the agreement of the Ministry of Finance to allow a minimal pilot decentralization effort in Conakry and Kindia. The pilot will delegate budget and management authority of a few selected line items to each level of political authority down to the school level. School Directors will have budget authority only over furnishings, learning materials, transportation, and public events. This topic is further discussed in Section C., Operating Assumptions and Hypotheses, below.

B3. Poor Internal and External Efficiency

Although gross enrollment has steadily improved, net enrollment has stagnated. Many students who are enrolled in full six-year cycle elementary schools, particularly in Conakry, repeat grades, and many of those in smaller rural schools, are socially promoted and eventually drop out because they are unable to successfully handle the schoolwork. Estimates of the time needed for an average student to complete six years of primary school vary widely from 8 years to 20 years. According to the *Limited Sector Assessment*, only 5 percent of children finish school in six years, with 25 percent taking eight years, and the remainder taking even longer or not finishing at all. External efficiency also appears to be poor. Male students cited lack of interest as the primary reason for leaving school. The best way to address poor internal and external efficiency is to improve the *quality* of instruction. In this regard, the CSP's second intermediate result, "Improvement of classroom instruction" is appropriate.

B4. Geographic Disparities

According to Ministry estimates, only 716 of the country's 4,000 plus schools offer all six grades. Most of the remaining schools offer only one or two grades. This lack of coverage has been poorly understood by decision makers who are unaware of the locations of the full service schools in relation to the incomplete cycle schools. In the latter, promotion from grade to grade is made as a group (alternance) and promotion is virtually automatic. In a two-classroom school, students will remain together throughout six years, with a new class entering school every three years. Ages at entry will vary from 7-9.

USAID has developed a Geographic Information System (GIS), which is a database containing the exact location of each school, health center, village, etc. This system will be merged with the MEN's M.I.S system to make cartographic representation of education system coverage possible. About halfway completed, the GIS system will be finished by mid 2001. There also appear to be

many displaced Guinean children (IDPs) who have moved to new areas and should be given an education. No one seems to know exactly where they are, and a study to determine their numbers and whereabouts might be useful.

B5. Bottleneck at the Secondary School Entry Level

The low pass rate in the sixth year exams may be a reflection of the availability of space in the first year of secondary school. Only about half of those who reach sixth grade pass the exams for seventh grade. In rural areas, secondary school is simply not an option. Many rural parents choose not to send their children, especially girls, to secondary school due to long travel distances involved. This is a serious equity issue. Despite this, the entry classes in secondary are over crowded, and the sixth grade pass rate is much lower than it could be. Since most children who begin elementary school never reach secondary, many are no longer fit for rural preoccupations and lack skills to find jobs in the cities. These “at risk” youth are becoming an increasing concern throughout West Africa. It is suggested that USAID/Guinea study this problem in the course of the next CSP design. Several missions (Mali, Benin, perhaps Senegal) are now developing or considering activities that strengthen industry clusters and, at the same time, prepare youth for the workforce.

B6. Rural and Gender Equity

Although good progress has been made in this regard, large disparities continue to exist between rural and urban school enrollment and between male (70 percent) and female (44 percent) gross enrollment. Although total gross enrollment in Conakry stands at 93 percent, rural gross enrollment is at 38 percent with rural girls at 26 percent. This disparity is driving USAID and other donors to develop specific activities that are targeted toward rural populations, especially girls. The USAID “SAGE” product has made some headway as has the World Bank (FIMG) intensive pre-service teacher training program. The new WB “Education de Base pour Tous” program will offer incentives to attract teachers to remote rural areas. It is noted that significant gains in female participation have been made in both the World Education and Save the Children activities.

B7. Replication of Community Participation Programs

The organization and training of education related community groups (APEAEs – Associations of Parents and Friends of the School) is a slow and costly process involving local NGOs that are financed by USAID. While the Mission’s pilot efforts have been extremely successful in this regard, replication on a national scale is daunting. USAID’s role was to develop the model and test it; now it must be marketed vigorously to other donors. Unless the GOG and other donors prioritize grassroots community participation, momentum and enthusiasm will be lost. The World Bank and other donors, including the French, appear to be interested in supporting grassroots development in the Education sector.

B8. Policy Reform

According to several staff, USAID was more successful in influencing policy reform when it had access to non-project assistance (NPA). Since NPA is no longer available to the Mission, it has

had to develop other tools to promote change at the national level. The WB respects USAID's achievements in Guinea, particularly at the planning and grassroots level, and USAID has been able to influence the Bank's policy focus in the education sector. Furthermore, through its integral involvement in PASE 1 and 2, USAID has developed a collaborative working relationship with key MEN staff, many of whom are former USAID long-term participant trainees. Having said this, policy reform appears to have slowed down, and the reform that *is* taking place is largely due to World Bank efforts.

The preceding section demonstrates the depth and complexity of issues and obstacles that slow down Guinea's goal of providing basic education to all children. It is clear that USAID alone cannot overcome the ensemble of these obstacles and that, along with policy reform, better donor collaboration will be necessary.

C. Operating Assumptions and Hypotheses

The most significant operating assumption in the CSP, as the MEN moved from PASE I to PASE II was the shift from an emphasis on *access* to a focus on *quality*. This shift is wise and appropriate. It makes little sense to enroll increasingly larger numbers of children in school if they subsequently drop out due to lack of teachers, poor quality education, and disinterest. Guinea can ill afford to use its scarce financial and human resources in this way. The shift to quality makes good sense.

Intermediate Result No. 1 states, "It is essential that decisions on school reform be made in close coordination with local schools and communities." It further states that "decentralization of financial and management capacity is an important part of this intermediate result." Critical assumptions are:

- GOG and MEN will make resources available in order to execute policies.
- MEN structure and delegation of authority will be transparent and allow for decentralized use of information and decision-making as well as for decentralized budget development and financial control.
- The government of Guinea will be committed to broadening stakeholder participation in decision-making.

FQEL has emphasized strengthening national systems, but it will move increasingly to the community level in its second phase. This should put the government and communities on much better footing to implement eventual decentralization. However, over the past four years, little progress has been achieved in reforming government policies toward decentralization. According to both the *Limited Sector Assessment* of 1999 and *Potential sources of conflict and instability in Guinea*, very few national resources committed to education in Guinea ever reach the school level, except for the payment of teachers' salaries. The key question is whether decentralization, if it happens, will result in more and better use of central financial resources at each succeeding level? The real issue may be *transparency* rather than decentralization. Stakeholders at each level of government should be made aware of their budgetary entitlement. Allocations for education should publicized on radio and other media, as appropriate.

Real budgetary decentralization, which implies a transfer of authority, finances, and power, is unlikely to happen in the short to mid-term in Guinea. In the West African context, decentralization often enables the education hierarchy to shift the onus of responsibility for financing from the government to parents. Whereas local support for schools is a legitimate objective and highly encouraged by the World Bank, many communities simply lack the resources needed to pay for their children's education. Budgetary transparency combined with good management information systems should enable the GOG to develop better resource allocation models which will target resources toward communities that are most in need. Decentralization is not essential to build a quality school system with improved access. A decentralized system in Guinea might be difficult to implement, even in consideration of the short-term financial management training that has been provided under FQEL. Budgetary transparency, combined with community oversight of local budgets and better management information systems, should lead to better equity and higher quality education.

The hypothesis cited in intermediate result No. 2 remains valid. "Improving instruction is related to increased quality, access and equity." The last sentence deserves special note, "If quality...is improved, more children should be able to move smoothly through the system, reducing the need for wasteful grade repetition and drop-outs."

The critical assumptions are equally valid and, in the main, have been borne out:

- Improved instruction and materials design and development will lead to better student performance
- Improved teacher support will lead to better instruction and student performance
- Resources to support qualitative improvements will be available and provided in a timely manner

To improve classroom quality, USAID supports in-service training and helps the National Pedagogic Institute develop its capacity to produce low-cost teaching manuals and student materials. Guinea's teachers now benefit from in-service radio-based training, which focuses on modern participatory methodology and pedagogical innovations. All students in primary schools throughout the country benefit from radio instruction several times per week.

The IR 3 hypothesis is that equity (rural/urban, male/female) is essential to increase participation rates. Since Guinea is essentially rural and rural participation rates are incredibly low, particularly for girls, the hypothesis is valid.

The critical assumptions are mainly valid:

- The GOG and MEN are committed to making resources available to equity improvements and supporting ongoing efforts targeted at the community level
- Interest in pursuing equity objectives extends beyond the education sector, with other groups willing to join in
- Parents, teachers, and community groups are willing to take actions supportive of equity objectives

The third assumption is over-reaching. It is not self evident that parents are willing to send girls to school on an equal par with boys. It would be more accurate to assume that parents..... *can be encouraged* to take actions supportive of equity objectives.

The Mission's education program in Guinea supports higher enrollment by girls. According to a recent CDIE Impact Evaluation on Improving Girls' Education in Guinea, there are three important lessons learned:

- Improved planning and effective management information systems reinforce efforts to improve girls' education.
- Community level effort has been shown to be highly effective in bringing about attitudinal and behavior change with regard to gender roles.
- Communities will support schools they trust, and send their girls to them.

Since USAID/Guinea is involved in all three of the above, its strategy for increasing girls' enrollment would seem to be highly appropriate.

D. Issues or Questions That Need to Be Strategically Examined

D1. HIV/AIDS

HIV/AIDS is not only a health problem; it is a national problem. AIDS cannot be cured but it can be prevented. It is important that all available means, including the schools be used to educate and inform children and adults on this subject. The challenge will be to develop and strengthen classroom-based life-skills education with a special emphasis on community mobilization and girls' education. HIV/AIDS education should be introduced to parent associations and via functional literacy programs coming through NGOs affiliated with World Education and Save the Children. Radio-based interactive instruction on AIDS prevention should be provided to children and young adolescents in the last two years of primary and the first three years of secondary school. The Ministry of Education has formed a high level group of educators who have attended meetings and seminars in Senegal and Ghana on the subject of HIV/AIDS prevention. The way that HIV-AIDS education and information are introduced in this predominantly Islamic state with a relatively low prevalency rate is important.

Although AIDS in Guinea is not yet epidemic like in other African countries, it has the potential to explode rapidly due to the high mobility of its population and strong military presence on its borders. It is not too early to engage in mid- to long-term planning on the management and mitigation of teacher losses, and strategies for addressing the educational needs of orphans and other children affected by HIV/AIDS. In this regard, the Mission should consider using the services of the AFR/SD/ED HIV-AIDS team which works with education ministries and missions to develop strategic and implementation plans; assists missions to incorporate HIV activities into their education frameworks, and develops indicators to monitor educational outcomes.

D2. Synergy

There is much opportunity for synergy among international donors working within the education sector. Although USAID has a close working relationship with the World Bank, the Mission may wish to better coordinate its efforts with other donors such as the Agence Francaise de Developpement, the European Commission, and various international NGOs. The Mission should also consider using existing community groups to disseminate information on issues pertaining to other S.O.s in health, natural resource management, education, or democracy & governance, as appropriate. For example, the MEN is about to implement a pilot decentralization exercise in Kindia, an area where Aide-Action supports a small percentage of APEAEs. Since community groups in that area have already been formed and trained by the NRM S.O., one of the NGOs working with World Education in the Fouta could be asked to provide parents within the NRM community groups that do not have APEAEs, with training in the oversight of their schools.

D3. Decentralization

The Mission should re-consider whether to maintain decentralization of the education system as an intermediate result and assumption. Decentralization is not likely to happen, and there are many reasons why it may not be desirable in the short- to mid-term. But transparency is essential, and if combined with “de-concentration”¹ which is progressing nicely, will give local officials effective control over their budgets.

D4. FQEL for Basic Education

This mission has done an effective job of transforming many, if not most, primary education classrooms into inductive, participatory, interactive learning environments. Those few students who successfully bridge the seventh year bottleneck will encounter a startling reversal in a sense that they will be thrown back into a rote, highly authoritarian learning environment, undermining much of what they learned by way of problem solving and teamwork. FQEL planning tools have already been developed and applied throughout the elementary school system, and it may be logical to extend these planning tools to junior secondary education. This is not to suggest that USAID leap into secondary education with both feet, but rather that it extend an existing tool and program a bit further into the system.

D5. Policy Reform

Policy reform in the education sector may have been easier to achieve when NPA was available. Most missions now feel that NPA was *not* a useful tool, and that most governments used it poorly or not at all, as in the case of Benin. Dialogue and donor collaboration can be an even more powerful force for reform. Although USAID has an effective relationship with the most important multi-lateral donor, the World Bank, far more can be done by working with other donors. For example, a sector investment plan (SIP) could commit each donor to assist with parts of PASE II to assure universal coverage.

¹ Limited programmatic authority without financial control.

D6. Training

Due to high cost, the Mission has cut down on the amount of long- and short-term U.S., in-country and third country training it finances. Since there appears to be a need for more training in Guinea, the Mission should explore ways of making training more cost effective.

SECTION V

SO 4: Democracy & Governance

The 1998-2004 USAID/Guinea Democracy & Governance (DG) SO 4 “Improved Local and National Governance Through Active Citizen Participation” links well to the CSP Program Goal and fits within the agency’s overall strategic framework. The Guinea DG strategy emphasis has broadened over time from a grass-roots, civil-society focus and political party development to one that includes nationally-broadcast timely events aimed at conflict mitigation and multi-party expression. The language of the SO has incorporated this focus on national impact. Language in two of the three IRs and related indicators also was refined to capture national impact, focusing on the “development of more credible political processes in Guinea” and “the steady progress in the opening of political dialogue and reduction of potential internal sources of conflict.”

One underlying rationale of the DG SO is that “Democracy and Governance (D/G) integrates conflict mitigation activities throughout the SO, contributing to ... regional stability.” On a strategic level, USAID/Guinea might now consider refining the DG SO statement to highlight conflict mitigation and stability. This is suggested because the DG SO has broadened to include events that provide safety valves. For example, multi-party regional and national seminars support long-term DG progress. However, the immediate impact of these events has been the alleviation of rising internal tensions that could threaten national stability.

A. Summary of Findings

We highlight here our team’s findings on and recommendations for USAID/Guinea’s DG strategy. These suggestions are discussed in further detail in the subsections that follow.

- The greatest conceptual challenge facing USAID/Guinea’s DG strategy is how to balance support for stability with that of longer-term DG progress. The practical challenge is how to select and implement a reasonable number of activities that are likely to be successful.
- The Mission should consider highlighting conflict mitigation and stability in the SO.
- To review and guide the CLUSA approach in terms of cost-effectiveness, USAID/Guinea should collect direct and indirect beneficiary figures from the CLUSA activities.
- It is suggested that USAID/Guinea adopt a realistic and protective set of implementation practices regarding CSO federation of its CSO clients.
- Several modifications are recommended below in the IRs and their indicators.

B. What Worked Well and Major Obstacles

B1. Impact on Customers

Because the ultimate customers targeted by the strategy are many (Guinean citizens, local government, NGOs, political parties), impact on these customers is difficult to capture. This is

virtually the entire country. In effect, USAID/Guinea is committing itself to the proposition that all persons in Guinea will be positively affected by its DG activities. Such a statement is usually seen at the visionary CSP program goal level. At the SO level and below, the statement needs to be viewed from a capacity perspective: can USAID/Guinea generate impact and changes for all these customers?

To encourage demand for better governance and democratic practices, the 1998 debut of the CSP focused DG resources and approaches on supporting the economic and mobilizing powers of citizen groups across all SOs. These community-level practices include electoral processes for choosing leadership, accountability and responsiveness of group leadership to their members, and the raising and sharing of revenues and responsibilities. A concerted effort has been made to support women and youth participation. However, the effect of these capacity-building efforts has not translated into better governance practices on the part of the GOG. The structures of local government have gained tax revenues, but there are no systemic changes regarding responsiveness to citizens or transparent use of revenues.

The Education SO's APEAEs show success in popular participation: the construction and maintenance of schools, student attendance, girls' education. National NGOs have begun to apply skills gained from capacity-building activities, and political party development is underway. Within CLUSA's DG activities, the ERAs have diversified their revenue sources and array of livelihood activities and are meeting basic needs through the application of surplus income and management skills. However, CLUSA activities appear to be costly. Many successful grassroots democracy programs known to the consultant engage, train, and mobilize direct beneficiaries for roughly \$10 to \$12 per person. The per-beneficiary cost of the CLUSA approach appears to be much higher.

To review and guide the CLUSA approach in terms of cost-effectiveness, USAID/Guinea should collect direct and indirect beneficiary figures from the CLUSA activities.

B2. Democracy Efforts and Political Patronage

The following observations provide an insight into how the USAID/Guinea-supported CSOs and grass-roots democracy efforts can be quickly undermined with the extension of political patronage to the CRD level. CRD appointments risk diluting or compromising:

- Community-level incentives for participation
- The ability of members to advocate
- The electoral process for representation at the sous-prefet level
- Civil society decision-making power regarding use of revenues
- Hopes for more transparent use of revenues

According to numerous sources, the CRD appointments have begun in the Mamou prefecture and the Coyah area. Near Mamou, this coincides with the establishment of sous-prefectoral APEAE bureaus. A GOG appointed vice-president of the CRD near Mamou is also the president of an APEAE sous-prefectoral bureau. One of the national NGO partners appears to be contributing, without intent, to CRD appointed power by suggesting that APEAE member

meeting attendance and revenue collection be encouraged from the sous-prefet and CRD levels. Such a practice could run counter to established meeting schedules that are gender/workload sensitive and grass-roots initiated, and it could seriously damage broad DG efforts if it were widely repeated.

Current NRM CSO structures have been federated to a high-level representing more than 30 villages in the forest area. Such a structure can be valid for advocacy should it be independent of CRD and sous-prefectoral appointments. However, a second and lower CSO structure would better support sustainable resources management practices and ensure an equitable spread of benefits. To ensure equity of access to forest resources, the lower-level structures need to be limited to a few villages and have direct representation of ex-slaves, landowning families, women, youth, and new immigrants. Lower-level committees could reinforce group accountability and solidarity for sustainable practices by sharing the cost of penalties incurred for individual infractions.

It is suggested that USAID/Guinea adopt a realistic and protective set of implementation practices regarding CSO federation of its CSO clients.

For example, the GOG frequently exercises its prerogative to replace appointees without notice. Given this reality, it would be naive to build CSO links with the GOG based on any individual CRD appointee's progressive attitudes in favor of CSO autonomy. USAID/Guinea needs to review CSO federation — kinds, levels, autonomy of federated CSO structures — in light of CRD patronage. National NGO partners need to detach grassroots participation incentives from the CRD convocation-powers and support the grassroots' control and transparent use of revenues generated.

B3. Stability and Conflict

Further impacts regarding stability and conflict need to be explored. Support might include strengthening the GOG's capacity for dialogue and articulation of key concerns. Some preliminary suggestions are that any such support should be strictly limited in cost and time and should aim mainly to help the GOG prepare key decisions and present them to the public to display transparency and demonstrate concern for popular opinion and well-being.

Measuring the full impact of USAID/Guinea's successes in conflict mitigation appears to be challenging, as reporting so far has focused primarily on emotional changes (relief of tension, frustration). USAID/Guinea could better capture and present results related to conflict prevention and mitigation should it articulate a conflict baseline. This baseline, developed along KAP (knowledge, attitudes, practices) lines, could include changes in:

- The number of incidents that demonstrate conflict
- Practices both on the part of the GOG and by key civil society groups and/or political parties
- Knowledge as to what persons/key groups understand to be the sources of and solutions for conflict
- Attitudes/emotions

C. Critical Assumptions

The Mission's critical assumptions developed in 1998 were optimistic given the political context. In April 2001, they could be considered heroic. The basic premise is that an organized and countervailing civic society will influence government responsiveness. As of April 2001, the current political reality is one of:

- Centralizing power to the executive branch and ruling political party
- Reducing non-donor driven opportunities for civic dialogue with the state
- Extending the political patronage system to the CRD level by replacing elected CRD members with those appointed by the GOG
- Increasing the opportunities for arbitrary financial practices at the local government level through the extension of patronage to the CRD level
- Increasing human rights abuses

The backsliding trend became apparent with the GOG's forceful response to demonstrations surrounding the contested municipal elections in 2000. The April 2001 GOG executive order that levies extraordinarily high charges for licenses, taxes, and use of most telecommunications systems exemplifies the acceleration of tightening control.

The challenge of supporting stability and DG progress was evident in the 1998 DG analysis. The analysis portrayed few opportunities to address systemic issues, such as financial mismanagement at all levels, the overwhelming power of the executive branch of government, the weak adherence to free and fair election practices, the limits on press freedom.

The critical assumptions' tag-on statement, "This is to be done in combination with strategic assistance at the national level where possible..." has proved to be USAID/Guinea's greatest direct opportunity for supporting stability and indirectly addressing overwhelming systemic DG issues. The need to support stability has become more compelling. The conflict zone — the area where cross-border violence continues between Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Guinea — touches 11 of Guinea's 33 prefectures. A series of questionable conflict mitigation strategies (ECOWAS decisions regarding the deployment of ECOMOG) have not been adopted by the GOG. The GOG has been slow in generating alternative transparent remedies for the border conflicts. It has declined to participate in key regional conflict negotiations, such as the Lome Accords. Certain core subjects that drive internal conflict remain screened from public dialogue or broadcast; they include ethnic tensions and certain corruption scandals. The number of IDPs is increasing due to conflict, and the IDP diaspora has been cited as one of the reasons for postponing legislative elections.

USAID/Guinea began preparations for conflict mitigation and stability prior to finalizing the CSP. The preparations led to USAID's being ready for serendipitously timed events. For example, the internal tensions erupting over contested municipal elections, as witnessed in the June 2000 Mamou-based demonstration, were subsequently provided a safety valve for peaceful expression. This safety valve was the widely broadcast NDI regional political fora that took place even where municipal election violence occurred. This activity supported multi-party

dialogue and assisted in internal conflict mitigation. USAID/Guinea and its partner, NDI, have identified a set of topics that are at the core of internal tensions for national-level and multi-party dialogues. They include the re-establishment of the High Council for Electoral Affairs and financial compensation to those persons whose property was destroyed in the disturbances.

USAID/Guinea has proved to be innovative and timely in its support for conflict mitigation. However, support for long-term progress is hampered because of increasing setbacks in the GOG's commitment to DG.

The Mission should consider highlighting conflict mitigation and stability in the Democracy and Governance SO.

D. Discussion of USAID's SO Intermediate Results

D1. Modifications to IR 4.1

In order to be measurable, IR 4.1 “Effective Citizen Participation in Local Governance” should be modified to read “More Effective Citizen Participation in Local Governance.” The key term “effective local governance” could be redefined in view of the extension of political patronage. For example, the phrase “effective local governance” could be narrowed to a civil society focus, such as the promotion of self-sufficiency and internal democratic practices within CSO memberships.

In this vein, related indicators could be modified or dropped. For example, 4.1.a could omit the reference to CRDs. And 4.1.b should be dropped, as realizing it might jeopardize the gains made under 4.1 c.

D2. Modifications to IR 2

It is suggested that USAID/Guinea consider recasting IR2 to focus on long-term preparation for a free and fair multi-party electoral process. Political party development remains essential to supporting long-term DG progress. The IR 2 indicators are tied directly to political party development. However, fostering political party development and expression through more responsive political processes has been rendered largely inapplicable in light of:

- Contested municipal elections
- The lack of follow-through on CRD elections and the beginning of appointing the CRD officials
- The postponement of legislative elections
- The promulgation by decree of measures previously rejected by the National Assembly

There are few to no legitimate processes for influencing and/or improving the state's governance practices from advocacy efforts. There are no advocacy NGOs that represent the concerns of the common citizen and are financially independent of donor funds. Consequently, looking to ways of supporting the long-term need for a free and fair multi-party electoral process appears a more promising approach.

E. Issues or Questions That Need to Be Strategically Examined

The bottom-up approaches being implemented by USAID/Guinea provide many opportunities for DG to lend well integrated, cross-cutting synergy to all the CSP SOs. Synergy can be augmented at the national and grass-roots level should USAID/Guinea choose to adopt the following suggested technical considerations. DG/multi-sectoral synergies can emerge particularly through realignment of USAID implementation practices across the SOs, especially those related to CSO establishment and strengthening. The suggestions are as follows.

E1. CSOs and Members Employing Democratic Practices

USAID/Guinea is establishing and/or strengthening CSOs under all four of its SOs. All USAID-supported CSOs have benefited from training and application of democratic practices. However, information related to the overall number of direct and indirect CSO beneficiaries largely remains unannounced in terms of impact. The counting of these efforts is scattered through an array of SO documents; however, the numbers are readily available. To better capture impact and highlight the synergies between DG and other SOs, USAID/Guinea could develop one or two indicators per SO that would state the numbers of CSOs and CSO members employing democratic practices. The compilation of these SO numbers/indicators related to CSOs would present an impressive figure of impact and synergy on the Program Goal.

E2. Successful Development and Democracy Model

The use of the Grameen Bank model for multi-sectoral development and grass-roots democracy could be employed across all SOs. This model has already been successfully adapted to many different cultural contexts and is extremely cost-effective. It allows participants to address poverty through income-generating activities and group savings-and-loans, and training and support for internal DG practices, particularly those related to representation, decision-making, gender equity, transparency, and accountability. In addition to supporting grass-roots, problem-solving skills, the model reinforces attention to the myriad conditions that create poverty. For example, members of the Grameen Bank groups adopt a core set of behavioral practices in health and hygiene, the education of children (particularly girls), the promotion of natural resource management (particularly sources of water and trees), and the abolition of key cultural practices that plunge families into economic straits or discriminate against females. Moreover, many of the organized groups move on to mobilizing for political representation. Variations of the Grameen model could be rather easily integrated across all the SO CSO efforts and help multiply impacts related to the CSP Program Goal.

E3. Use of Democracy & Governance Analysis

USAID is working to establish and strengthen CSOs in all four strategic objectives. The political context affects them all, and the Mission could make broader use of technical DG analysis in helping all partners function effectively in that context. In addition, DG as a technical field offers quality participation practices that are relevant across all sectors and could be made available more systematically to the sector partners. Such collaboration between the DG SO team and the

other SO teams would better ensure that the CSOs have the best opportunities to achieve results related to representation, advocacy, influencing the GOG, and revenue raising and allocation.

E4. Civic and Human Rights Education

USAID/Guinea is poised for a more concentrated effort in civic education and human rights education. It is suggested that USAID make additional use of its grassroots outreach and national NGO partners by piggy-backing human rights and civic education into community mobilizing activities across the SOs. Furthermore, focusing human rights and civic education on concrete examples that resonate directly in peoples' lives will have a much greater chance of being understood and applied than a more formal pedagogic approach outlining broad legal frameworks and/or charters describing these rights and responsibilities. For example, the APEAE and ERA membership would benefit from knowing the GOG has signed an international convention stating its commitment to the rights for all children to education and health care, and what those rights are.

E5. Increased Dialogue

USAID/Guinea has many opportunities to create occasions for grassroots representatives to talk directly with high-level GOG officials, policy makers, and other donors. The burgeoning effort to strengthen key national advocacy NGOs would permit the establishment of annual meetings where selected grassroots representatives can present their concerns and solutions directly to national policy makers. This practice would put a human face on any research undertaken by the advocacy NGOs to shape policy. In the NRM activities, Winrock International holds regular meetings with the GOG, USAID/Guinea and its national NGO counterparts. The national NGO counterparts in turn meet with the population involved in the NRM activities. These consultation practices could better support advocacy, representation and good dialogue by holding an annual event at which selected grassroots representatives from the NRM activities meet directly with Winrock, USAID, the GOG and national NGOs counterparts to discuss how their lives are changing and how natural resource management practices are changing as a result of the program.

E6. Participation by Poor People

Improving participation by poor people across all the SO community-level activities would be much enhanced if economic incentives were built into all mobilizing frameworks. The emphasis on generating more resources and employing them remains a necessary and core aspect of supporting community-level DG, provides an economic base for future political empowerment, and promotes the self-sufficiency of communities to initiate and respond to their own needs. In Guinea, the majority of demonstrations have been over economic pressures and losses, such as the 1996 military storming of the palace to demand better pay and conditions, and the 1999 October fuel riot and the related transport cost-increase riot. Increased support for self-governing, revenue-generating, community-based approaches will also assist in conflict prevention.

E7. HIV/AIDS

The spread of HIV/AIDS is caused by many underlying economic and socio-cultural conditions. USAID/Guinea's efforts would be best served through a multi-sectoral approach. In DG, women's economic status and rights, and the rights of the HIV-positive person, could be integrated into the approach. However, the issues of women's rights and the rights of the HIV-positive person are entangled with a variety of cultural norms and beliefs. For instance, in the cultural context of Guinea it is not condoned for a married woman to refuse to engage in sex with her husband, even if she knows he is HIV-infected. Many people remain uneducated as to the cause and transmission of AIDS and therefore fear and isolate or ostracize the HIV-infected person. USAID would benefit from the guidance and partnership of local experts or local NGOs on how to market the issues on rights through the cultural sensitivities surrounding these complex beliefs and practices.

F. The Budget

Recent USAID administrative and political changes have resulted in "New Areas of Strategic Orientation and New Spheres of Influence." There is an increasing emphasis on conflict prevention and development relief. The suggested alliances for these approaches are with the U.S. Institute for Peace, the U.S. military, indigenous religious organizations dedicated to conflict prevention and resolution, and PVOs with conflict management expertise. Prior to these announcements, USAID/Guinea had established a demonstrated commitment and success regarding its support to conflict mitigation and prevention, and this should continue under the new guidelines.

Between 1998 and 2001, USAID/Guinea obligated roughly \$5.7 million toward a wide range of DG activities intended to result in national and grass-roots DG progress. The DG budget appears to be small given the geographic spread and intended impacts. In preparation for developing its DG budget-support rationales, USAID/Guinea might wish to further highlight conflict mitigation while tightening its DG SO, related IRs, and the range of supporting activities.

ANNEX A

A Note on the Consultancy Team

George T. Eaton, Team Leader, served in USAID field missions in West, East, and Southern Africa for more than two decades. His last three USAID assignments (1982-1993) were as Director, Office of Program, Bureau for Science and Technology, USAID/Washington; Director, USAID/ Mauritania; and Director, USAID/Niger. As a freelance consultant, he has led and participated in a variety of long- and short-run assignments, such as directing an emergency food security program in Rwanda, assessing the capacity building impact of the UN's basic health and basic education activities in Mali, advising on long-term USAID strategy for West and Central Africa, planning hurricane recovery in Haiti, and helping to further NGO development in Egypt.

Roy Hagen, Natural Resources Management, specializes in community-based approaches and linkages between agricultural sustainability, population growth, natural resources and the environment, including review of complex situations, prioritizing issues, issue analysis, and preparing mitigating recommendations. Mr. Hagen has helped develop national biodiversity strategies for eight African countries, including Guinea. He led the strategic analysis of USAID/Madagascar's \$60 million natural resources Protected Area Program. In addition to many short-term assignments, he has held long-term NRM positions in Burkina Faso and Madagascar.

Gary Leinin, Health, served in USAID health, child survival, and family planning positions in East and West Africa as well as in USAID/Washington. His experience covers government-operated health programs and private sector approaches (social marketing of contraceptives, oral rehydration treatments). As a private consultant, he advises USAID and its health sector programs and projects on strategy, management approaches, and technical problems.

Jenna Luché, Democracy and Governance, has designed and implemented many governance and gender programs in Africa and Asia, especially in local governance and civil society development. She has established monitoring and evaluation systems to track impact. Ms. Luché has extensive West Africa experience in Senegal, Guinea, and Burkina Faso and has served in long- and short-term positions for USAID, the United Nations, and other donors.

Norman Rifkin, Education, held senior positions in USAID in Senegal, Mali, and Indonesia, as well as in USAID/Washington as chief of education and human resources development for Africa and chief education officer. His background as a teacher, principal, and educational administrator gives him particular understanding of the issues in education planning, the development of equity-enhancing programs, and the improvement of instruction. Before this assignment, he recently assessed part of USAID/Guinea's education program.